

UNTOLD

STORY LEADS FROM MONTANA



SPRING 2002 • visitmt.com

Back to Simpler Times?

Do you think you could trade in your car, shower, oven and computer to live as a Montana homesteader in the late 1880s? That's exactly what three modern families did for the PBS series "The Frontier House." The six-part television series, which airs in late April, duplicates life on the 1883 Montana frontier.

But before these families could step back in time, they needed some training. Nevada City, Montana was their training site. Here they learned basic survival skills: carpentry, wood stove cooking, gardening, animal care, hunting and making soap. The family's three frontiers cabins were modeled from ones found in Nevada City.

Even though the project is complete and the families have transitioned back to the 21st century, the mementos will stay in Nevada City. The Montana Heritage



Nevada City, training site for the PBS series.

"This series takes a good look at how tough life really was and how hard our ancestors worked to survive."

Commission, the state agency responsible for managing the historic mining town, recently acquired many of the artifacts used in "The Frontier House."

"I believe this series will be as popular as the Ken Burn's war series," says Jeff Tiberi, executive director of the Montana Heritage Commission. "We are hoping that people will be excited about "The Frontier House" and will come see the cabins."

The formal opening of the Frontier House display will coincide with the series airdates of April 29 and 30 and May 1. Weekly tours of the cabins will begin in May.

"Since September 11, I believe people are looking back to reconnect to their roots. I am hoping that people look seriously at the past and see what the pioneers did for us," says Jeff. "They worked hard, virtually from dawn to dark. This series takes a good look at how tough life really was and how hard our ancestors worked to survive."

Interested in stepping back in time? For more information on Nevada City visit the Montana Heritage Commission website at www.edheritage.org/heritagecommission and look under "what's new."

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Carved in Stone

In January 2001, President Bill Clinton designated two new national monuments in Montana, Pompeys Pillar National Monument and the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument.

Being recognized isn't new for Pompeys Pillar; it has been a National Historic Landmark since 1965. According to David Jaynes, assistant field manager for the Bureau of Land Management Field Office in Billings, now that Pompeys Pillar is a national monument, it will get more national recognition. The pillar is located 25 miles east of Billings.

"With more national recognition and funding to maintain Pompeys Pillar, we hope to have a new visitors center built by 2006, the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial year," says Jaynes.

The massive 150-foot sandstone pillar, which sits on the banks of the Yellowstone



Pompeys Pillar

River, carries the only remaining physical evidence of Lewis and Clark's historic journey. Upon his return from the Pacific Ocean, William Clark carved his name and the date of July 25, 1806 on the rock. However, Clark wasn't the only person to do so; for centuries hundreds of markings, petroglyphs and inscriptions by visitors have transformed this geologic phenomenon into a living journal of the West. Pompeys Pillar, named after Sacagawea's young son Jean Baptiste Charbonneau (nicknamed Pompy), was also a significant site for Native Americans. The Crow people called the pillar the "Mountain Lions Lodge."

The annual Clark Day event held at Pompeys Pillar commemorates both the Lewis and Clark Expedition and the rich history of Native American people. The two-day event is set for July 27-28, 2002.

For more details on Pompeys Pillar, Clark Day and other Lewis and Clark-related events, visit Travel Montana's website at visitmt.com.

An Unforgettable Stretch

Stretching for 149 miles across north-central Montana, the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument remains largely unchanged since Meriwether Lewis and William Clark led their expedition through the area in 1805.

"This designation will bring attention to the special landscape of the Missouri River and will be a tremendous boost to the local and statewide economy," explains Gary Slagel, the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument manager for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). "This area has a tremendous wildlife, recreational and scenic value."

The national monument includes 377,346 acres of land managed by the BLM and takes in the Upper Missouri National Wild and Scenic River, stretching from Fort Benton upstream into the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge in central Montana.

One may ask why the Upper Missouri River was included in the national monument status. The answer? It's awesome! The river retains many of the same qualities and much of the same appearance today as when Lewis and Clark traveled down its waters. It is the last undeveloped portion of the Missouri River. Along the banks of the Missouri a traveler can see the wonders Lewis reported in his journals: beautiful white sandstone cliffs and abundant wildlife including elk, antelope, deer, waterfowl, raptors and 48 species of fish. Remnants of a rich history are scattered throughout the monument:



The Wild and Scenic Missouri River

the coulees and breaks hold archeological and historical sites such as teepee rings, historic trails, abandoned homesteads and lookout sites used by Meriwether Lewis.

A float down the Missouri is a lasting experience. Travelers can choose from a number of guided services or they can head out solo. For more information on a Missouri River float check out www.visitmt.com.

Fore the Love of Golf

It's been said that the Flathead Valley, in north-west Montana, might very well be the last best frontier of great undiscovered golf in the continental United States. After all, there are nine outstanding courses all within 30 to 45 minutes of each other in a valley ringed by the majestic grandeur of the Rocky Mountains. Within this spectacular mountain valley, the rivers, lakes, meadows and wildlife all contribute to a great day of golf.

"The Flathead Valley has a wide variety of golf courses, yardage, tees and greens," says Stephen Dunfee, president of the Flathead Valley Golf Association. "Beginner players can select a course with an easier slope rating while the more advanced golfer can find a challenging course to test their skills."

The area offers a mix of mature, well-tended courses along with contemporary layouts with carpets of bent grass greens, open



Buffalo Hill Golf Course in Kalispell

links-style layouts and tight, forest-lined fairways. The courses feature designs by Jack Nicklaus, Andy North and Bill Robinson. *Golf Digest* magazine recently ranked the Flathead Valley as one of the 50 Best Golf Destinations in the World.

"Another great selling point for these courses is the price," explains Dunfee. "Compared to other golf destinations our rates are a true bargain. Greens fees range from \$25 to \$58 peak season, compared to similar destinations that charge as much as \$75 to \$175 per round." The Flathead Valley Golf Association provides a toll free number guests can call to book advance tee times on the nine courses or arrange for discounted golf packages.

"Fore" more information about a great round of golf contact the Flathead Convention & Visitor Bureau at 800-543-3105 or visit <http://fcvb.org>

Park It This Spring

Which outdoor activity can you do that will get you in shape in one of the most beautiful settings in the world without costing you



a dime? The answer: a bicycle ride into Yellowstone National Park before the park is open to automobile traffic. From April 1-18, bicyclists can experience the grandeur of

Yellowstone without an entrance fee. A number of the park's roads will open to public vehicles April 19.

"In April Yellowstone is just waking up," says Kelli Sanders, one of the owners of FreeHeel & Wheel, a West Yellowstone, Montana ski and bike shop. "At this time of year bikers can ride at their own pace and view bald eagles, geese, bison and elk." All levels of cyclists can begin their trips at the

West Yellowstone entrance to the park.

"A lot of the Europeans who come here in early April don't realize the road is closed to cars so it's nothing for them to rent a bike and ride the 60-mile round trip from West Yellowstone to the Norris Junction," says Kelli. Due to the threat of bears, the popular stretch of road between Madison Junction and Old Faithful is closed to bikers.

Kelli explains that visitors who choose to bike throughout the park should be prepared for any type of weather. You can run into rain, snow, sunshine and hot temperatures all in one day, but if you dress for four seasons it's worth the trip.

Ready to cruise to West Yellowstone this spring? For details on biking into Yellowstone National Park, bike rentals or other travel opportunities, contact the West Yellowstone Chamber of Commerce at 406-646-7701 or visit www.westyellowstonechamber.com

Echoes of the Plains

A small granite marker rests along MT Highway 16 in the northeast Montana town of Plentywood. The marker is the state's only memorial to the passing of the great Sioux chief, Sitting Bull. This is the country where Sitting Bull lived his last years of freedom following the old ways of the hunt and the chase.

Fading echoes of the old ways can still be found in these rolling hills shaped by the



Photo courtesy Montana Historical Society

great continental ice sheets along the remote borderlands of Montana, North Dakota and Saskatchewan, Canada. Tepee rings and stone effigies on the hilltops, trail ruts carved by the great caravans of the Meti buffalo hunters' Red River carts, and drive lines leading the buffalo herds to slaughter remain to give silent testimony to a rich life on the prairie.

Today this glaciated terrain is known as the prairie pothole region, where efforts are underway to preserve the wetlands and prairie for wildlife and waterfowl production. Bird watchers from all over the country make their way to the Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuge and the small border town of Westby to add some of the more rare prairie birds and passerines to their life list.

When Sitting Bull surrendered on July 20, 1881, at Fort Buford, located in North Dakota two miles from the Montana border, he pleaded to be left to live out his life here in the borderlands. That was not to be, and his surrender opened the country to the great waves of boom and bust settlement that were to follow. Yet today, visitors can still see the vast panorama of the prairie and feel the presence of the time of the hunt and chase.

For more details about Montana's northeast corner known as Missouri River Country, log onto www.missouririver.visitmt.com

MARCH

- 1-3 **Billings Home Improvement Show**—Billings 259-3114 or 860-3915
- 1-3 **Winter Carnival**—Red Lodge 446-1718 or 446-1720
- 2 **Banked Slalom**—Missoula 549-9777
- 2 **Ben Ali Haggin's Mile High Nordic Ski Race**—Anaconda 782-0900 or 782-0316
- 2-3 **Wild West Shred O'fest Snowboard Competition**—Bozeman 586-1518
- 3-5 **Women's and Men's Workshops**—Whitefish 862-2909
- 9 **Annual St. Patrick's Race**—Anaconda 563-7618
- 9 **Equine Expo**—Helena 442-5707 or 841-3142
- 9 **Milk River Wagon Train Feed and Dance**—Malta 654-1100 or 654-1796
- 9 **Rendezvous Cross-Country Ski Race**—West Yellowstone 646-7701
- 9-10 **National Ski-Joring Finals**—Red Lodge 446-3232
- 10 **Duggan Dolan Blarney Stone Fun Run**—Butte 782-0742 or 782-1859
- 13-17 **C.M. Russell Auction of Original Western Art & Exhibitors Show**—Great Falls 761-6453
- 13-17 **Western Heritage Artist Association Art Show**—Great Falls 453-2990
- 14-17 **Great Falls Native American Art Show**—Great Falls 453-9980
- 14-17 **Jay Contway and Friends Art Show**—Great Falls 452-7647
- 14-18 **World Snowmobile Expo**—West Yellowstone 646-7895 or 646-7701
- 15-17 **Irish Music Fest**—Butte 782-0742 or 782-1859
- 15-17 **St. Patrick's Day Events**—Butte 782-0742 or 782-1859
- 16-17 **11th Annual Snow Rodeo and Spring Ski Race**—Essex 888-5700
- 17 **North Dakota Downhill**—Missoula 549-9777
- 18 **Spring Fling and Trade Show**—Lewistown 538-3441 or 538-3442
- 22-24 **Montana Outdoor Recreation Exposition**—Billings 657-1246 or 657-1440
- 23 **18th Annual Spring Art & Craft Show**—Helena 449-4790
- 23 **Pinhead Classic**—Bozeman 586-1518
- 23-24 **Annual Marshall Mountain Snowmobile Hillclimb Championship**—Missoula 258-6000
- 29-30 **MSU Indian Club Pow Wow**—Bozeman 994-3751 or 994-4880

- 30-31 **Montana Snowboard Championships**—Neihart 236-5522
- 30-31 **Telemark Classic**—Missoula 549-9777

APRIL

- 1-18 **Cycle Only Days**—West Yellowstone 646-7701
- 5-6 **Bulls-R-Us**—Sidney 482-3120
- 5-6 **NILE Bull Riders Invitational**—Billings 256-2495
- 6 **Annual Furniture Race**—Whitefish 862-2900
- 6 **Double Pole, Pad and Pedal**—Bozeman 586-1518
- 6 **Mannequin Jumping**—Neihart 236-5522
- 6 **Run for the Trees**—Missoula 721-7275
- 19-20 **Spring Fling Home Garden Expo**—Glendive 365-5601
- 19-21 **Home & Garden Show & Sale, Great Falls Homebuilders Association-22nd Year**—Great Falls 452-4663
- 20 **8th Annual Children's Activity Fair**—Great Falls 761-6010
- 20 **12th Annual Railroad Swap Meet**—Livingston 222-2300
- 20-27 **International Wildlife Film Festival**—Missoula 728-9380
- 21 **22nd Annual Helena Railroad Fair**—Helena 443-0315 or 443-1578
- 26-27 **8th Annual Montana StoryTelling Roundup**—Cut Bank 873-2295 or 873-2039
- 26-27 **Madison River Musical Festival**—Ennis 682-4053
- 26-28 **Flat Iron Quilt Show**—Thompson Falls 827-3666
- 26-28 **Rendezvous...Eureka!**—Eureka 889-4636
- 27-28 **Helena Mineral Society's 54th Annual Gem & Mineral Show**—Helena 442-1226 or 442-5172
- 28 **2002 Ice Breaker Road Race**—Great Falls 771-1265
- 28 **CCPs Kite Festival & Spring Fling Fun Runs**—Helena 443-4608

MAY

- 3 **Artwalk Downtown - May Event**—Billings 252-0122
- 3-5 **Essexpress Railfan Weekend**—Essex 888-5700
- 4-5 **Artists and Craftsmen of the Flathead Spring Show**—Kalispell 257-8475
- 10-12 **Buffalo Feast and Pow Wow**—St. Ignatius 745-2951 or 745-0500
- 11 **21st Annual Montana Women's Run**—Billings 656-6973 or 255-8488
- 11 **International Migratory Bird Day**—Moiese 644-2211 ext. 207
- 11 **Spring Cycle Tour/Lakeside Ride**—West Yellowstone 646-7701
- 13-18 **MSU-Billings Wine Festival**—Billings 657-2244
- 13-19 **Historic Preservation Week**—Kalispell 756-8381 or 758-2800

- 15 **Montana Peace Officers Memorial Day**—Deer Lodge 846-3777
- 15-17 **Special Olympics Summer Games**—Billings 268-6759
- 16-19 **May Fair Fling**—Missoula 721-3247
- 17 **8th Annual Big Timber Bull-a-Rama**—Big Timber 932-6228 or 932-6697
- 17-19 **Lewistown Gun Show**—Lewistown 538-5436
- 17-19 **Miles City Bucking Horse Sale**—Miles City 232-7700 or 232-6585
- 17-19 **Stumptown Days**—Whitefish 862-3501
- 17-19 **Whoop-Up Days**—Conrad 278-3612 or 271-7791
- 18 **Community Watershed Festival**—Bozeman 582-0526
- 18 **Montana Race for the Cure**—Helena 227-7286
- 18-19 **Billings Gem & Mineral Annual Show**—Billings 656-5707 or 252-6502
- 24 **Spring Sling Bull-A-Rama**—Hamilton 363-3411
- 25 **Horseback Poker Run**—Virginia City 843-5484
- 25 **Mount Powell Pro Lumberjack Show & Dance**—Deer Lodge 846-2034
- 25-26 **Loon & Fish Festival**—Seeley Lake 677-2517
- 25-27 **Black Powder Shoot**—Havre 265-2483
- 25-27 **Wagon Train-Sandcreek Clydesdales**—Jordan 557-2865
- 27 **Crazy Mountain Museum Festival**—Big Timber 932-4284
- 30-6/2 **Mission Mountain Testicle Festival**—Charlo 644-2984 or 644-0117
- 31-6/1 **Frontier Days**—Culbertson 787-5821
- 31-6/1 **Governor's Cup Art & Craft Show**—Helena 449-4790
- 31-6/2 **Bigfork Whitewater Festival**—Bigfork 837-5888

For a complete list of events, see us at visitmt.com

FROM MONTANA

The diversity of events, places and people in Montana is almost as wide as the state itself. We hope to give you a taste of that diversity with this quarterly newsletter. In addition, my office offers these services to editors, writers and producers.

Visual Materials

Color slides, 8"x10" B/W photos and stock video footage are available for editorial use.

Writer/Photographer Referrals

We can put you in contact with many of Montana's most talented and experienced freelance writers and photographers.

Editorial Copy/Calendar of Events

We can provide background information or editorial copy for many subjects. We also maintain a calendar of events for the entire state.

Individual Attention

If you need the latest vacation guide and road map of Montana, a liaison with other government agencies or detailed information to fit a specific story angle, we're here to assist you.

Mary Boyle, Publicity Coordinator